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A COMPARISON OF LOW PROFILE VERSUS HIGH PROFILE
DESISTS IN CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR,

Master's Project

Submitted to the School of Education,
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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Classroom management is one of the key factors in establishing an effective learning environment. To maximize learning the teacher must maximize the time spent on task. Inattention and misbehavior minimize the time spent on task; therefore, the teacher must terminate both active and passive misbehavior. The problem lies in determining which management techniques will most effectively terminate misbehavior.

Definition of Terms

According to Kounin (1970) misbehavior should be dealt with quickly and in a manner that does not distract others. A teacher's actions that are intended to stop misbehavior while allowing the lesson to continue are referred to as desists. Desists can be ranked on a continuum according to the degree of further disruption to the other students caused by the desist. Low profile desists are those actions which cause the least amount of disruption to or distraction from the lesson. Examples of

low profile desists include moving closer to the misbehaving student, incorporating the student's name into the lesson, and using nonverbal cues such as eye contact, hand gestures or touching. High profile desists draw the attention of the class away from the lesson or task and focus attention on the misbehaving student. Desists that are considered high profile include the threat or use of punishment, sarcastic remarks, and overdwelling on the misbehavior. Several researchers suggest that low profile desists are more effective than high profile desists (Lasley, Lasley, and Ward, 1989).

For the purpose of this study, misbehavior has been categorized into three types. First, there is misbehavior that causes one or two students to be off-task but is not disruptive to any others. Second, there is misbehavior that disrupts a particular area of the room or group of students. Third, there is misbehavior that is disruptive for the entire class.

Purpose of the Study

Current research on desists is very limited and is based primarily on studies done in urban settings. There is no research that confirms the conclusions drawn from these studies can be applied to urban settings. Urban students have different social, economic, and family backgrounds from the urban students. Current research also does not indicate

whether grade level influences the types of desists a teacher can use successfully. This study will determine if the conclusions drawn in current research can be applied to a specific grade level in an urban school. The purpose of this study is to show the relationship between low profile desists and the termination of misbehavior as compared to the use of high profile desists and the termination of misbehavior.

Hypothesis

The study will show that there is no significant difference in the rate of terminating misbehavior when using low or high profile desists with fifth grade students at Eastmont Park Elementary School in Dayton, Ohio.

Assumptions

Several assumptions have been made prior to the outset of this study. First, it is assumed that there is a relationship between a teacher's behavior and student's misbehavior. A teacher's decisions about appropriate management and discipline have a direct impact on the behavior of students. When students' needs for successful achievement, belonging, power, and fun are not met, misbehavior is likely to occur (Savage, 1991). In classrooms where these needs are met and where firm and consistent discipline is enforced, students learn to become responsible individuals and are able to make

appropriate choices about their behavior (Glasser, 1965). Secondly, it is assumed that there is a relationship between a teacher's behavior and the termination of misbehavior. The manner in which a teacher responds to misbehavior influences the student's choice to comply or to continue being disruptive or defiant. Responses that are harsh or overreactive usually are unsuccessful in terminating the problem (as will be discussed further in the research). Thirdly, it is assumed that teachers make a variety of responses to misbehaviors. The responses vary depending on the nature, frequency, and severity of the misbehavior. Teachers also respond differently from student to student. Responses may even vary depending on the teacher's own temperament.

Limitations

In preparing this study, it is recognized that there are limitations of gathering data that may effect the outcomes of the findings. First, Kounin (1970) states that using a human observer to gather data as opposed to a video recording device is a limitation because of the inability to obtain records of all that happens. Second, only one observer will be collecting all of the data. It is difficult for one observer to be aware of and to accurately and objectively record the activities of an entire classroom. The observer may pay attention to big

events and not notice certain nondisruptive events. Using one observer also limits the data to the behavior that the observer interprets as misbehavior. Third, the placement of the observer in the classroom may prevent adequate observation of all students. Fourth, all of the data will be collected in one school. This limits the generalizing of the findings to other urban schools. Fifth, the observer is a teacher within the building. She is known by most of the students being observed and has taught some of them in third grade. This may cause the observer to watch some students more closely than others. It may also influence the student's behavior while being observed. Finally, having an observer in the room may influence the methods the teacher uses to control classroom behavior.

Basic Procedures

The study will be conducted by observational techniques. An observer will collect data on misbehavior and teacher responses in two fifth grade classes in an urban school. The data will then be analyzed to determine if there is a significant difference between low and high profile desists in terminating misbehavior. Specific and detailed procedures will be discussed in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research on classroom management falls into two categories: preventing behavior problems and dealing with behavior problems when they do occur. Researchers and psychologists have differing philosophies about classroom management and how it should be implemented; however, there are some commonalities that link much of the research together.

Research on Classroom Management

Kounin (1970) was one of the pioneers of systematic, in-depth research of classroom management techniques. From videotaped research of kindergartens, Kounin concluded that the techniques of dealing with misbehavior are not significant determinants of how children behave in classrooms or how successful a teacher is in preventing a child's misbehavior from distracting others. Kounin defined successful classrooms as those having a high prevalence of work involvement and a low level of misbehavior. The successful running of a classroom is a

complicated system of programming for progress; providing challenging learning activities; initiating and maintaining movement in classroom tasks with smoothness and momentum; coping with more than one event simultaneously; observing and emitting feedback for many different events; directing actions at appropriate targets; and maintaining a focus upon a group. Kounin summarized these techniques into six terms which describe the behavior of effective classroom managers:

- 1) with-it-ness,
- 2) overlapping,
- 3) smoothness,
- 4) momentum,
- 5) group-focus,
- and 6) anti-satiation.

Love, patience, enthusiasm, and understanding, in and out of themselves are not qualities of effective classroom managers (Kounin, 1970).

Researchers (Emmer, Evertson, Clements and Sanford, 1982; Kounin and Gump, 1974) agree that the key to successful classroom management is preventing problems before they occur. Careful planning of the classroom rules, organizational procedures, and activities at the beginning of the year are the conditions that more likely result in a smooth functioning classroom. Effective managers explain the expectations and give the students ample opportunity to practice the routines and rules. Effective managers incorporate behaviors that convey purposefulness. They maximize instructional time. Effective managers demonstrate skill in maintaining the

students' attention. Students are carefully monitored. Activities are varied to allow for physical activity on the part of the students. Variations in voice, movement, and pacing are used to refocus students' attention. A high level of student involvement result in low disruptiveness. Events that disrupt the flow of time, such as transitions and delays, cause misbehaviors (Kounin and Gump, 1974).

The research of Rosenshine and Furst (1973) and Brophy and Evertson (1974) suggests that students learn best when the following teaching characteristics are present: clarity; variability in teaching methods; variety of curricula and/or media; enthusiasm; business-like behavior; indirectness (questioning rather than lecturing); student opportunity to learn the material; and multiple levels of and variety of activities.

Brophy and Good (1986) concluded that these teacher characteristics were the significant factors in preventing and terminating misbehavior. Other factors that minimized misbehavior were maximizing the time students are profitably involved in academic activities and resolving minor inattention before it develops into a major disruption.

Research on Desists

Misbehavior does occur even in the most effectively managed classrooms. Canter (1976) states that in order to

grow educationally, socially, and emotionally, children need to be in an environment in which a teacher sets firm, consistent, positive limits while providing warmth and support for appropriate behavior. When children do not have the limits they need, they "act up" in order to get attention. Children need to know what response there will be from adults so they can choose their behavior.

Canter's (1976) Assertive Discipline program assists teachers in running an organized, teacher-controlled classroom. The teacher is to respond to misbehavior by clearly stating expectations and is prepared to back up words with appropriate actions. A series of steps have been developed to implement the Canter program: 1) select four to five rules, 2) select three to six negative consequences, 3) select positive consequences, 4) inform students and parents about the program, and 5) implement. The program is implemented by use of directive statements and repetition of commands in an objective manner. Possible negative consequences include: 1) time out, 2) removal of a privilege or special event, 3) stay after school, detention, 4) visit to the principal, and 5) home consequences. Positive consequences include: 1) personal attention from the teacher, 2) positive notes to parents, 3) awards, 4) special privileges, 5) rewards, 6) home rewards.

High achieving classes tend to have some type of positive reward system (Fischer, 1981). Whenever possible misbehavior should be ignored and appropriate behavior should be reward. Specific guidelines for ignoring misbehavior will be discussed further. However, when misbehavior is disruptive, the consequences should match the level of severity (Canter, 1976).

Glasser and Driekurs (1972) support the technique of logical and natural consequences to misbehavior. Driekurs (1968) differentiates between natural and logical consequences. Natural consequences are natural outcomes of events without the intervention of a teacher. For example, a student who runs and falls may skin a knee. The injury is a natural consequence of the misbehavior. It was not planned or arranged by another. Many misbehaviors do not have natural consequences or may be too dangerous to allow natural consequences to occur; therefore, logical consequences may be applied. Logical consequences are events that are guided and arranged by another. These consequences must be discussed and understood by the student.

The manner in which a teacher handles misbehavior will determine the amount of disruption there is to the learning process (Good and Brophy, 1978). The disruptive influence of the teacher's intervention should not be

greater than the disruption it is intended to reduce (Jones and Jones, 1990). Researchers agree that minor misbehavior should be ignored if it meets the following criteria: 1) it is of short duration and not likely to persist or spread, 2) it is a minor deviation, 3) reacting to it would interrupt the lesson or call attention to the behavior unnecessarily (Jones and Jones, 1990).

Minor disruptions that do not meet the Jones and Jones criteria should not be ignored, but they should be handled quickly and in a nondisruptive manner since the goal is to simply return the students to work (Good and Brophy, 1987). Behaviors to be concerned about include: lack of involvement in learning activities, prolonged inattention or work avoidance, and obvious violations of classroom rules and procedures. These behaviors should be dealt with directly and without overreaction. A calm reasoned tone or approach (low profile) is more productive and less likely to lead to confrontation (Jones and Jones, 1990). Some examples of nondisruptive desists are: 1) redirect the student's attention to the task, 2) make eye contact, move closer to the student, use gestures, touch, monitor the student until the student complies, 3) remind the student of the correct procedure or rule, 4) and ask the student to stop the inappropriate behavior (Jones and Jones, 1990).

When misbehavior is dangerous or severely disruptive, direct intervention should be used regardless of how disruptive the desist may be (Good and Brophy, 1987). Behaviors that require special handling include rudeness toward the teacher, chronic avoidance of work, fighting, aggressive behavior, and defiance or hostility toward the teacher. These behaviors should be handled in two phases: the immediate response and a long range strategy. The immediate concern is to halt the behavior by demanding appropriate behavior and reminding the student of the expected behavior. Direct intervention should be used when no further information is needed. The intervention should be brief and direct, stressing appropriate behavior rather than misbehavior. Long range considerations include dealing with the cause of the problem and having a predictable classroom environment (Jones and Jones, 1990; Good and Brophy, 1987). A predictable classroom is one in which there is a set of consistent rules and procedures. Researchers (Kounin, 1970; Anderson, 1979; Brophy, 1988; and Evertson, 1989) agree that pre-planning and organization at the beginning of the year correlates with successful classroom management. Students need to be carefully familiarized with rules and procedures at the beginning of the year. Goals and expectations should be made clear. Once the ground rules are set, they should be followed in a consistent and predictable manner.

Regardless of the intervention used, the teacher should stay calm, not overreact, not threaten and not engage in an argument or confrontation. An inappropriately angry teacher response creates and increases disobedience and disruptive behavior (Kounin, 1970). Kounin (1970) and Evertson and Brophy (1976) found evidence of a "negative ripple effect" associated with harsh teacher criticism. Rather than improving student behavior, students tend to become more anxious and disruptive when teacher responses are angry and punitive. A "positive ripple effect" is associated with calm and immediate responses to a problem. The most effective results occur when a student is contacted quietly about behavior, when the teacher uses effective communication skills, when the student is reminded of the rules and extreme disruption is dealt with privately.

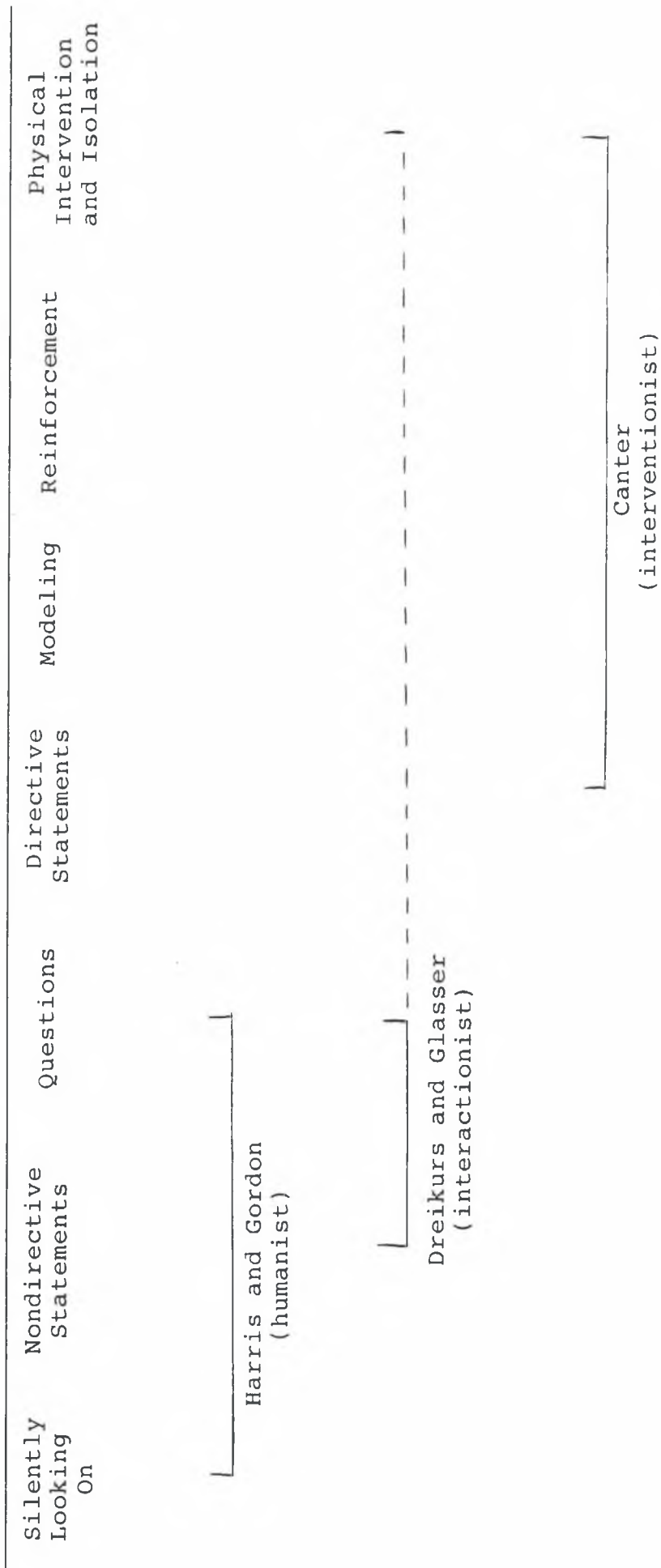
Wolfgang and Glickman (1986) have identified seven typical techniques teachers utilize when dealing with misbehavior:

1. Silently looking on;
2. Nondirective statements;
3. Questions about the behavior;
4. Directive statements;
5. Modeling correct behavior with that student or one that is doing it right;
6. Reinforcement;
7. Physical intervention or isolation.

The order of these interventions represents a power continuum. At the beginning of the list the student has the most power over his/her behavior and the teacher has the least. At the end of the list the teacher has more control over the students' behavior. Psychologists who advocate humanistic and psychoanalytical approaches to intervention such as Gordon (1974) and Harris (1969) advocate the use of silently looking on, nondirective statements and questions. These are the most child-centered techniques. Interactionists such as Driekurs and Glasser (1972) advocate a combination of nondirected questions, directive statements, and physical intervention. These techniques strive for a solution where teacher and students work together for a solution. Behaviorists (or interventionists) such as Canter advocate the use of directive statements, modeling, reinforcement, and physical intervention. In this case the teacher takes control. Each form of teacher-student interaction has benefits and limitations. There is no research that provides indisputable documentation that one method is superior to others (Wolfgang and Glickman, 1986). Figure 1 provides a description of the various desist techniques.

FIGURE 1

Teacher Behavior Continuum



Approaches to Intervention of Misbehavior

Wallen and Wallen (1978) raise concerns about the use of desists: 1) Overdependence of desists may cause additional classroom problems, 2) students may respond to the desist but repeat the misbehavior when the teacher is not around, and 3) desists may become ineffective with frequent use. They conclude that "reward" desists are more effective than "punishment" desists; however, it is difficult to ignore misbehavior in order to reward appropriate behavior. Similar to other researchers, Wallen and Wallen found it effective to devise a continuum of desists from least to most forceful (low to high profile):

1. eye contact;
2. move toward student;
3. hand on student;
4. talk privately;
5. sharp tone of voice;
6. warning;
7. move to temporary seat;
8. deprive recess;
9. warning of isolation;
10. isolation.

The type of desists should be varied to correspond to the severity and nature of the misbehavior.

Summary

Some researchers (Emmer, Evertson, Clements and Sanford, 1982; Kounin and Gump, 1974; Brophy, 1974) approach classroom discipline from a preventive standpoint. Discipline problems can be minimized if the teacher effectively manages the classroom. Effective management consists of careful planning, organization, clear rules and procedures, clarity in instruction, variety of teaching methods and materials, and a business-like attitude on the part of the teacher.

Other researchers (Glasser and Driekurs, 1968; Good and Brophy, 1987, Kounin, 1970; Wolfgang and Glickman, 1986; Lasley, et al. 1989; Wallen and Wallen, 1978) deal with effective classroom management once misbehavior does occur. Their findings indicate that there is a continuum of possible responses a teacher can have to a student's misbehavior. These desists are ranked from least to most forceful (low to high profile). The desist should correspond to the nature and severity of the misbehavior. Low profile desists have been found to be most effective in handling minor disruptions (Kounin, 1970; Lasley, et al; 1989). For more disruptive behaviors, appropriate desists are withdrawl or restriction of privileges, exclusion from the group, and assignments that reflect on rules and their ratonale (Good and Brophy, 1978). Punishment should be related to the offense. Punishment should be brief,

mild, and flexible enough to allow students to redeem themselves by correcting the behavior. Punitive and harsh punishment results in more aggressive behavior, more unsettled feelings about misbehavior and a decrease in concern about learning and school values (Kounin, 1970; Gump, 1974). Actions taken by the teacher in response to misbehavior should cause as little additional disruption as possible.

The purpose of this project is to expand the existing knowledge base to learn more about teacher usage of low and high profile desist techniques.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This investigation examines the effectiveness of low profile versus high profile desists in terminating misbehavior in an urban, fifth grade classroom. The subjects of the study are two fifth grade classes at Eastmont Park Elementary School in Dayton, Ohio. Eastmont is a racially balanced urban school with a population of middle and low income families. The total enrollment of the two classes is 52 students. Ms. White's (a psuedonym) class is composed of five white boys, two black boys, 12 white girls, and six black girls. Mr. Trigg's (a psuedonym) class is composed of three black boys, five white boys, nine white girls and nine black girls. The study took place during the first semester of the 1991-1992 school year.

The study was conducted through the use of observational data collection techniques. There was one observer. The data collection instrument used was the "Teacher's Reaction to Inattention and Misbehavior" observation form (See Appendix A). It is adapted from the

observation forms in Looking in Classrooms by Good and Brophy (1970). This instrument is designed to gather data that correlates the relationship between classroom activity, type of misbehavior, the teacher's response to the misbehavior, and the student's response to the teacher's correction. The data collection form uses lower case letters to denote each incidence of misbehavior. For each incidence of misbehavior four types of information are recorded. 1) The type of instructional situation (e.g., lecture, discussion, or recitation, small group activity, independent seatwork or study period and transition period). 2) The type of misbehavior (e.g., nondisruptive, disruptive in a particular area of the classroom, or disruptive for the entire class). 3) The teacher's response to the misbehavior (e.g., nonverbal cues or threatens punishment). 4) The student's response to the teacher's correction (e.g., the misbehavior stopped, the misbehavior was modified but not stopped, and the misbehavior continued unchanged). A separate form is used for each observation period.

Each class was observed for 30 minutes on six separate occasions for a total of 12 observations. The day of the week and the time of day were varied for each observation. There were three morning and three afternoon observations for each class. The observer sat in the back

of the room for half of the observation periods and in the front of the room for the other half of the observation periods. Each incidence of misbehavior was coded.

Narrative records were also kept in order to correlate the misbehaviors with what was going on in the classroom at the time.

Upon completion of the observations the data were tallied and compared in several different ways. First, a tally was made of desists used by each teacher classified by into the three categories of student response to the correction. This shows which desists were used and how successful they were in stopping misbehavior. Second, low and high profile desists were each analyzed separately to determine their individual success in terminating misbehaviors. (Desists items 1-6 are considered low profile; desists 7-14 are high profile.) The percentages of successful low and high profile desists were calculated by dividing the number of stopped misbehaviors by the total of low profile desists only. The same was done for the high profile desists. Third, low and high profile desists were then compared on rates of successfully stopping misbehavior. These percentages were calculated by using the total number of desists. Fourth, the two teachers' behaviors were compared according to types of desists used as success rates. Fifth, a Chi-square calculation was used to statistically determine if the

frequencies observed in the sample (misbehavior stopped with low versus high profile desists) deviates significantly from the frequencies statistically expected.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \left[\frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e} \right]$$

In order to interpret Chi-square values, the degrees of freedom and significance level (probability) must also be determined. Degrees of freedom is a mathematical concept that denotes the number of independent observations that are free to vary. For each test, degrees of freedom is calculated and the number is used to estimate the statistical significance of the test (df = (rows-1)(columns-1)).

CHAPTER IV

THE FINDINGS

During the course of 12 observations, a total of 100 incidences of misbehavior were recorded. Forty-one of the misbehaviors were observed in Ms. White's room and 59 were in Mr. Trigg's room. The majority of the misbehaviors (84%) were minor and nondisruptive in nature. The students in both groups were attentive and on task most of the time. There were a few incidences (14%) in which a small group or area of the room was distracted from the lesson. There were only two times that the entire room was disrupted by a student's misbehavior. In both cases the matter was handled quickly and the class was brought back to order.

Ms. White instructed from the front and center of the room and all desks were facing her. Her lessons were brisk paced and energetic. She called on a variety of students to respond in class. During two class sessions, Ms. White used candy as a reward to correct responses to review questions. This created a high energy atmosphere in which the students were eager to respond. Ms. White

used a token reward system in which students got free time on Friday if they did not lose any tokens that week. Only two students lost a token during the observation periods. Ms. White used low profile desists 51% of the time and high profile desists 49% of the time. She stopped 90% of misbehavior. Eighty percent of the stopped misbehavior was a result of low profile desists. She ignored minor misbehavior more than other techniques used. However, the four misbehaviors that continued were a result of a teacher ignoring behavior. She also successfully used directive statements such as "stop talking, open your book, raise your hand before you speak." Misbehavior stopped with that high profile approach. Nonverbal cues such as hand gestures, proximity, and eye contact were successful in bringing students back on task. Ms. White used a variety of low and high profile desists and was very successful in maintaining classroom discipline and keeping students on task. (See Table 1)

Mr. Trigg frequently addressed the class and gave assignments from his desk in the back of the room. When conducting a lesson or group discussion, he moved around to the front area of the room. When students were working independently, he moved around the room giving assistance and had students help one another. On several occasions, assignments were given without any introduction or

**Table - 1
Comparison of Teachers' Success Rates**

Teachers	Desists	Misbehavior Stopped	Misbehavior Modified	Misbehavior Continued
White	Low Profile	41%	5%	5%
	High Profile	49%	0%	0%
Trigg	Low Profile	58%	3%	17%
	High Profile	17%	2%	3%

explanation. Mr. Trigg's interventions to misbehavior were mainly low profile desists (78%). Like Ms. White, he was also successful in stopping misbehavior (stopped 77% of misbehavior). Only 3% of misbehavior was modified but not stopped; however, 20% of the misbehavior continued. This fairly significant percentage of continued misbehavior was largely attributed to one student who was habitually off task. Mr. Trigg either ignored or privately encouraged the student to work, but no change in behavior occurred. (This is a student with serious emotional problems.) Similar to Ms. White, Mr. Trigg usually ignored minor disruptions and they usually stopped without any further response. He also moved closer to misbehaving students and used hand gestures and facial expressions. Misbehavior was also frequently stopped when he reminded students of the classroom rules and used directive statements telling the student to stop a specific behavior. Mr. Trigg used more low profile desists; however, the high profile desists that were used were as effective in stopping misbehavior as the low profile desists. When misbehavior was ignored, it continued eight out of 28 occurrences (or 29% of the time).

In an analysis of the total results, low profile desists were used most often (see Table 2). Looking at the two types of desists separately, 76% of misbehavior

Table - 2
Comparison of Low and High Profile Desist Success Rates

	Misbehavior Stopped	Misbehavior Modified	Misbehavior Continued
Low Profile Desists	51%	4%	12%
High Profile Desists	30%	1%	2%

stopped when low profile desists were used. When high profile desists were used, 90% of misbehavior stopped. Both levels of desists were found to be effective in terminating misbehavior when they were used by the teacher.

In a comparison of the two levels, low profile desists were 51% successful in stopping misbehavior and high profile desists were 30% successful. Low profile desists changed but did not stop 4% of misbehavior while high profile desists made only 1% change. Misbehavior continued with low profile desists 12% of the time but only 2% of the time with high profile desists (see Table 3).

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between teacher response to misbehavior and student response to the teacher's correction. To determine if a statistically significant difference exists, chi-square was used (see Table 4). The Chi-square value was calculated to be 3.17, the probability level (significance level) was set at .050 (which was the least restrictive level). At degrees of freedom 2, one would need a Chi-square value of 5.99 or larger to support a hypothesis of significant response. The calculated Chi-square of 3.17 shows that there is no relationship. Therefore, this study has proven the hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the

Table - 3
Desists Categorized by Student Response

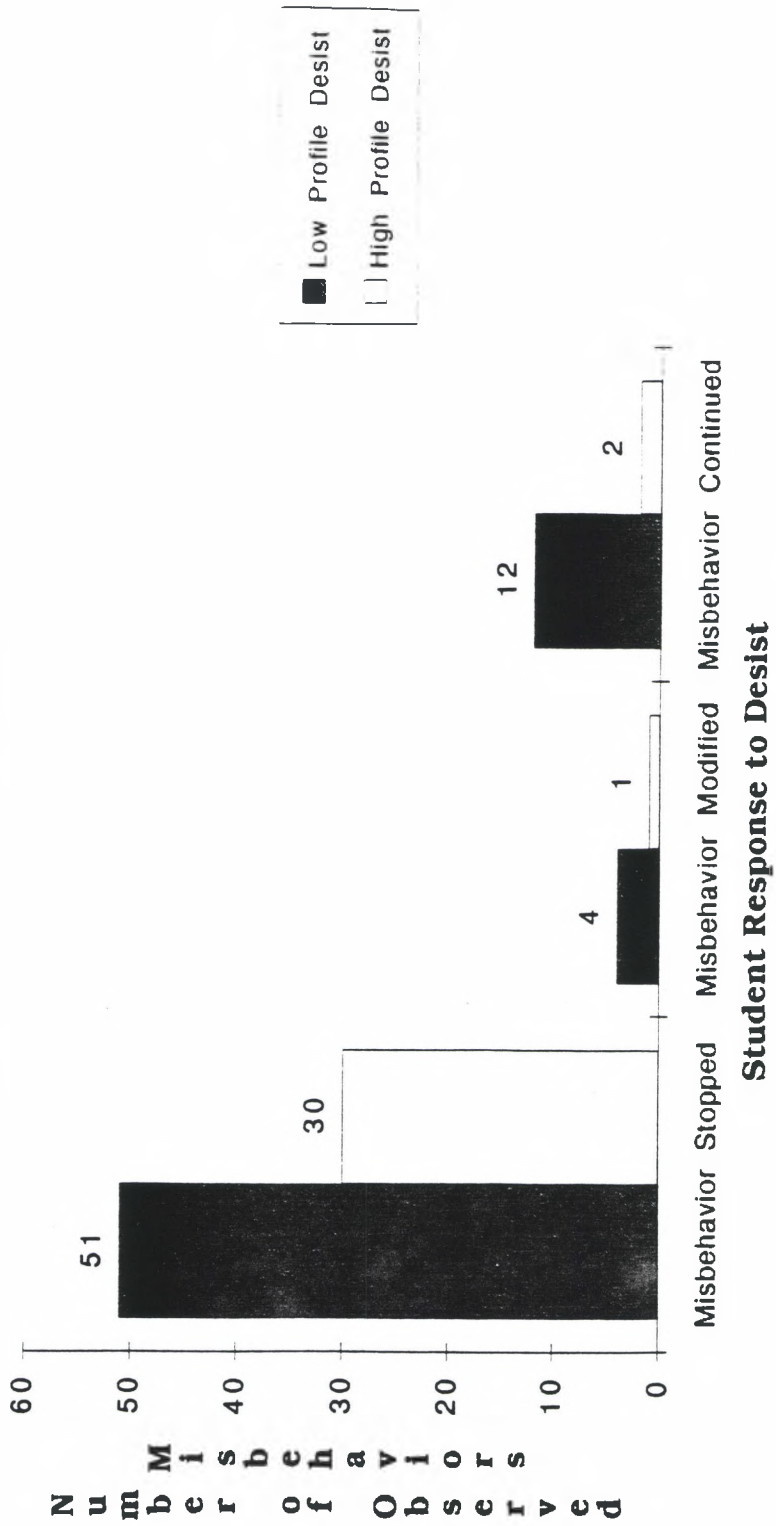


Table - 4
Comparison of Low and High Profile Desist Success Rates
Chi-square Figures

	Misbehavior Stopped	Misbehavior Modified but not Stopped	Misbehavior Continued	Total Teacher Response
Low Profile Desists	fo=51 fe=54.27	fo=4 fe=3.35	fo=12 fe=9.38	fo=67
High Profile Desists	fo=30 fe=26.73	fo=1 fe=1.65	fo=2 fe=4.62	fo=33
Total Student Responses to Desists	fo=81	fo=5	fo=14	fo=100

($X^2=3.17; p<.05; df=2$)

fo=frequency observed
fe=frequency expected

rate of terminating misbehavior when using low or high profile desists with fifth grade students at Eastmont Elementary.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem, as defined by this study, is that one of the factors in establishing a productive learning environment is for teachers to know how to effectively handle misbehavior. There is limited research in this area and it is inconclusive in determining which techniques most effectively stop misbehavior. These techniques or desists have been ranked by researchers on a continuum scale from high to low profile (see Appendix B). The research does not confirm which desists are most effective and if the same desists can be used with all grade levels and in all learning environments. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine if there is a significant difference in terminating misbehavior when using low or high profile desists with fifth grade students in an inner city school.

The study was conducted by observing two fifth grade classes. When misbehaviors occurred, teacher responses and each student's reaction to the teacher's correction were coded. Percentages were calculated to compare the success

rate of the different desists that were used by the teachers. A Chi-square was calculated to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between the success rate of high and low profile desists.

The findings of the study indicate that low profile desists were used more often by the teachers but they were not more successful in terminating misbehavior than the high profile desists. Minor disruptions were often ignored and usually the problem stopped without any further intervention. However, some of the misbehavior that was ignored continued without any response from the teacher and therefore some students were off task for extended periods of time. The most commonly used and highly successful interventions the teachers used were: moving closer to the students (stopped misbehavior 75% of the time), nonverbal cues (100% effective), reminding students of the rules (87% effective), and direct statements telling the student to stop the misbehavior (92% effective). These methods represent a combination of low and high profile desists.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the information gathered in this study. There is no single desist or group of desists that can be considered most effective in dealing with all types of misbehaviors.

Teacher responses to misbehavior should vary depending on the nature of the problem, the frequency of its occurrence, and the temperament of the student. When minor problems are ignored, the teacher should monitor the situation to determine if the problem has stopped and, if not, an intervention must occur. Low profile desists should be used more often because of their potential to be less disruptive to the rest of the class members who are on task. High profile desists can be used effectively, but they should be used sparingly due to their distracting nature. High profile desists are effective in dealing with more serious problems. Teachers need to be aware that there is a continuum of responses and be able to choose wisely from them when misbehavior does occur.

Future Research

Further investigation needs to be done concerning effective and appropriate desists for each age or grade level. For example: Is there a difference regarding which desists work better with students at different grade levels? Do older students respond better to low profile desists since they are developing a sense of self-control? Do younger students respond better to a direct, more verbalized, high profile type of discipline? Further investigation also needs to be done to specify when certain desists are most effectively used. Some

researchers recommend the same type of teacher response for any type of misbehavior, while others advocate a variety of responses depending on the severity of the misbehavior. More research also should be done concerning students who are behavior problems on a daily basis. A desist may temporarily stop their misbehavior, but what should be done when students repeatedly misbehave? What desists should be used when a first desist is ineffective?

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Observation Form

Teacher's Reaction to Inattention
and Misbehavior

PURPOSE: To see how the teacher handles these situations. Code the following information concerning the teacher's response to misbehavior to inattentiveness. Each lower case letter stands for a different misbehavior incident.

BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES

MISBEHAVIOR CODES

A. TYPE OF SITUATION

A B C D

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. Lecture | a. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2. Discussion or recitation | b. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3. Small group activity | c. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4. Independent seatwork or study period | d. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5. Transition activity | e. | --- | --- | --- | --- |

B. TYPE OF MISBEHAVIOR

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. Nondisruptive (only one or two students involved) | f. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2. Disruptive in particular area | g. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3. Disruptive for entire class | h. | --- | --- | --- | --- |

C. TEACHER'S RESPONSE(S)

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. Moves closer to misbehaving student | i. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2. Uses name dropping technique | j. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3. Uses nonverbal cue, such as eye contact, hand gesture, touching | k. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4. Incorporates distracting behavior as part of lesson | l. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5. Investigates privately | m. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 6. Ignores minor disruption (5 min.) | n. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7. Uses a rule reminder | o. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8. Uses punishment, such as detention | p. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 9. Threatens punishment | q. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 10. Calls offenders name and asks for attention | r. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 11. Praises someone else's good behavior | s. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 12. Asks sarcastic questions | t. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 13. Rewards good behavior | u. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 14. Other: specify _____ | v. | --- | --- | --- | --- |

D. STUDENT RESPONSE TO TEACHER CORRECTION

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. Misbehavior stopped | w. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2. Misbehavior modified but not stopped; student engages in a different misbehavior | x. | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3. Misbehavior continues unchanged | y. | --- | --- | --- | --- |

APPENDIX B

Low and High Profile Desists

1. Moves closer to misbehaving student;
2. Uses name dropping technique;
3. Uses nonverbal cues;
4. Incorporates distracting behavior as part of the lesson;
5. Investigates privately;
6. Ignores minor disruption;
7. Uses a rule reminder;
8. Uses punishment;
9. Threatens punishment;
10. Calls offender's name and asks for attention;
11. Praises someone else's good behavior;
12. Asks sarcastic questions;
13. Rewards good behavior;
14. Other: directive statements.

Appendix - C Desists Used by Teachers and Student Responses

Teacher Response to Misbehavior (Desists)	Ms. White			Mr. Trigg		
	Misbehavior Stopped	Misbehavior Changed	Misbehavior Continued	Misbehavior Stopped	Misbehavior Changed	Misbehavior Continued
1. Moves closer to misbehaving student				6		2
2. Uses name dropping technique	3			2		
3. Use nonverbal cue	5			7		
4. Incorporates distracting behavior as part of the lesson				1		
5. Investigates privately	1			1		
6. Ignores minor disruption	8	2	2	18	1	8
7. Uses rule reminder	3			4		1
8. Uses punishment	2					
9. Threatens punishment	1					
10. Calls offenders name and asks for attention	1			1		1
11. Praises some else's good behavior	1					
12. Asks sarcastic question	3			1		
13. Rewards good behavior						
14. Directive statement to stop misbehavior	9			4	1	
Total Number of Desists	37	2	2	45	2	12
% of Responses	90%	5%	5%	77%	3%	20%

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